

Shorten et al. does not remedy any of the deficiencies of Kim, Dolan and/or Naruse et al.. Shorten et al. does not teach or suggest at least two separate belts each having a continuous, consistent surface, that are dimensioned for direct foot contact and that impart different proprioceptive demands on the foot, ankle and lower leg, as required by independent claim 9. As such, even if one were to combine the teachings of Kim, Dolan, Naruse et al. and/or Shorten et al., one would not arrive at the present invention as defined in independent claim 9.

Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that independent claim 9 patentably distinguishes over the prior art of record for at least the above reasons.

Claims 10-13 depend directly from independent claim 9 and include all of the limitations found therein. Each of these dependent claims include additional limitations which, in combination with the limitations of the claims from which they depend, are neither disclosed nor suggested in the art of record. Accordingly, claims 10-13 are likewise patentable.

In view of the foregoing, favorable consideration and allowance of the present application with claims 9-13 is respectfully and earnestly solicited.

If there are any other issues remaining which the Examiner believes could be resolved through either a Supplemental Response or an Examiner's Amendment, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number indicated below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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